

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

On page 11, please amend lines 16-19 to read as follows:

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a game which can heighten interest in sports trading cards as well as in the actual sport or theme represented by and depicted on the cards.

On page 12, please amend lines 1-16 to read as follows:

These objects, as well as further objects which will become apparent from the discussion that follows, are achieved, in accordance with the present invention, by a game playing method which uses a plurality of trading cards, each identifying a "game player", ~~a "game event" or some other game-related feature~~ for a specific game sport and having a unique identifier of alphanumeric characters associated therewith.

As used hereinafter, the term "game player" is intended to mean and include a real, ~~or fictitious~~ live person or, ~~alternatively, a game event or other game-related feature~~

~~which is designated (e.g., depicted) by a trading card, who~~
is actively engaged in playing a sport.

In the game, a set of physical trading cards is offered for sale to collectors. Various groups of these cards may designate the same game player but each card in each group has a different and unique identifier.

On page 15, lines 19-23 and page 16, lines 1-2, please
amend the paragraph to read as follows:

Baseball and other fantasy sports leagues ~~are not the~~
~~only trading card themes~~ thus contemplated by the present
invention. ~~Nor is~~ As may be seen, the present invention
~~limited to~~ references the real time performance of currently
active sports players. ~~In fact, many non-sports trading~~
~~cards, such as Pokeman cards, have become popular with~~
~~collectors. The invention is equally applicable to these~~
~~types of trading card themes as well.~~

On page 17, lines 10-21 and page 18, lines 1-6, please
amend the paragraphs to read as follows:

Figs. 1A and 1B illustrate the front and back, respectively, of a typical trading card which may be used in accordance with the present invention. It will be understood that this card may be is a "physical card" -- that is, chattel ~~or it may be a virtual card which is presented electronically as an optical image, for example on a computer screen.~~ In any case, this card should have the "look and feel" of a typical conventional trading card when in use.

In this example, the card depicts and describes a ~~fictitious~~ baseball player called "Magic Wonder" who currently plays for the ~~fictitious~~ team of the "North Dakota Hooters". Although both the players and team are fictitious, the actual trading cards used in practice of the invention will depict real players actively engaged in a real sport, such as baseball, football, basketball, golf, etc., for which player's statistics are known. As is typical conventional for baseball trading cards, the picture of the "talent" is depicted on the front of the card (Fig. 1A) and the ~~vital~~ statistics concerning this talent are set forth on the back (Fig. 1B). ~~It will be understood, however,~~

~~that instead of designating a real or fictitious person as a game player, a trading card could feature a "game event" or other game-related feature..~~

On page 18, lines 17-21 and page 19, lines 1-5, please amend the paragraph to read as follows:

It will be understood that a collector who wishes to add "Magic Wonder" to his or her fictitious virtual baseball team need only purchase the "game playing rights" to this card, or another card depicting Magic Wonder which has another card identifier. It is not necessary for the collector to actually possess this card or even own the physical chattel itself, although the most common usage may indeed be to possess both the physical card and game-playing rights simultaneously. The game playing rights may be sold separately from the physical ~~or virtual~~ card.

On page 20, lines 1-12, please amend the paragraph to read as follows:

The trading card company may offer the actual physical trading cards, or they may simply offer to sell the game playing rights to each card. Collectors may then purchase

the physical ~~or virtual~~ trading cards, which incorporate the game playing rights thereto or, as a minimum, the collectors may merely purchase the game playing rights to these cards. Either way, the collectors may purchase the cards with the game playing rights, or purchase the game playing rights alone, from either a trading card company or from another collector. If purchased from another collector, the "deed" must be registered with the trading card company so that it can update its ownership records.

On page 22, lines 13-21, please amend the paragraph to read as follows:

The game service provider then advances the status of the game according to the current information about the registered game players therein, and according to the rules of the game (e.g., the rules of fantasy baseball rules). The outcome of the game thus depends upon how the actual (e.g., baseball) game players are performing in real life ~~or, if the game players are fictitious, how they would perform with the game players on their team against other subsets of game players on other teams.~~

On page 24, lines 1-8, please delete the following paragraph:

~~It should be emphasized that the games which are contemplated by the method according to the invention are not limited to sports games. For example, games may be played with motion picture character cards, Pokemon cards, DragonBall Z cards, military character cards or other fantasy cards. Furthermore, contests of endurance or even wars may be fought using trading cards designating karate fighters, foot soldiers, or the like.~~

On page 27, lines 10-19 and page 28, lines 1-7, please amend the paragraph to read as follows:

Variable Supply of Certain Cards to Stimulate Interest in Collecting and Purchase: As is the case with current, non-interactive, trading cards, not all card images are plentiful. In fact, in order to stimulate collector interest, it is common practice among trading card producers to ensure that certain cards are produced in extremely limited quantities. This practice may be employed effectively for the purposes of the present invention. Again using the baseball ~~and fantasy~~ sports embodiment, very

few ~~Mark McGwire~~ Barry Bonds cards could be produced as a conscious choice by the card producer, assuming that many collectors will buy more of the product in search of this card because of ~~McGwire's~~ Bond's potential attractiveness to the interactive game or pursuit. New player cards could be released during the season as well. ~~In the fantasy sports league embodiment, certain~~ Certain lesser-known players could emerge as popular cards if they are performing well in real life.

On page 28, lines 8-20, please amend the paragraph to read as follows:

Selection of Cards to be Active for a Particular
Interactive Game or Task to Ensure Continual Interest:

Using the baseball card ~~and fantasy sports league~~ embodiment as an example, only one shortstop position may be required for an interactive game. However, "Joe" (a theoretical user of the method according to the invention) may have two different shortstop cards that he has registered with the producer's database (as explained below). Joe could designate one of these shortstops as "active" for the specified interactive game, and keep the second one in

reserve. In this way, if Joe's selected card is under-performing, he could change the card that is active, within the rules of the interactive game.